

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (currently amended): A universal one-piece hand guard for a hacksaw having a handle, a frame and a blade, said hand guard comprising:

a semi-rigid flat shield formed of a single piece of resilient non-metallic material having a height generally equal to that of the frame or handle and having a width at least as great as a projected frontal width of a user's hand when grasped around the handle in using the hacksaw;

said shield having a notch extending downwardly through a central portion of said shield from an upper margin thereof, said notch having a width and length sufficient to be fitted around and receive support from an upper portion of the frame at a point in proximity to and forward of the handle;

said shield also having a mounting aperture positioned below said notch and spaced above a lower margin of said shield and being sized to fit over and receive support from a threaded end of an elongated rear blade tensloning support held within a lower corner of the frame;

said shield also supported along the upright central portion against a rear upright portion of the frame which extends between said notch and said mounting aperture;

said shield having sufficient resiliency for a portion thereof to be protectively deflected around a corresponding portion of the hand upon impact against an object during use of the hacksaw.

Claim 2 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 1, wherein:

said resilient material is sheet elastomer.

Claim 3 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 2, wherein:

said elastomer is neoprene.

Claim 4 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 2, wherein:

said resilient material has a thickness in the range of about 1/8".

Claim 5 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 4, wherein:

said shield has a width and a height of about 5".

Claim 6 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 2, wherein:

said shield is generally rectangular and has a thickness of about 1/8" and a width and a height of about 5".

Claim 7 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 3, wherein:

said neoprene has a durometer reading of in the range of about 60.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A one-piece universal hand guard for a hacksaw having a handle, a frame and a blade, said hand guard comprising:

a resilient single piece flat shield having a height generally equal to that of the frame or handle and having a width at least as great as a projected frontal width of a user's hand when grasped around the handle in using the hacksaw;

said shield having an elongated vertical notch extending downwardly along a central axis of said shield from an upper margin thereof, said notch

having a width and length sufficient to be fitted around and receive support from an upper portion of the rear of the frame at a point in proximity to and forward of the handle;

said shield also having a mounting aperture positioned below said notch and positioned on said central axis and spaced above a lower margin of said shield, said mounting aperture being sized to fit over and receive support from a threaded end of an elongated rear blade tensioning support held within a lower corner of the frame by a threaded nut;

said shield also positioned along the central axis thereof against a rear upright portion of the frame which extends between said notch and said mounting aperture;

said shield having sufficient resiliency for a portion thereof to be protectively deflected around a corresponding portion of the hand upon impact against an object during a forward cutting stroke of the hacksaw.

Claim 9 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 8, wherein:

said resilient material is sheet elastomer.

Claim 10 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 9, wherein:

said elastomer is neoprene.

Claim 11 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 9, wherein:

said resilient material has a thickness in the range of about 1/8".

Claim 12 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 11, wherein:

said shield has a width and a height of about 5".

Claim 13 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 9, wherein:

said shield is generally rectangular and has a thickness of about 1/8" and a width and a height of about 5".

Claim 14 (original): A universal hand guard as set forth in Claim 10, wherein:

said neoprene has a durometer reading of in the range of about 60.

Claim 15 (currently amended): A resilient universal single piece hand guard for protecting the hand of the user of a hacksaw having a handle, a frame and a blade, said hand guard comprising:

a flexible flat generally rectangular shield formed of a single piece of resilient material having a height generally equal to that of the frame or handle and having a width at least as great as a projected frontal width of a user's hand when grasped around the handle during hacksaw use;

said shield having an elongated notch extending downwardly through a central portion of said shield from an upper margin thereof, said notch having a width and length sufficient to be fitted around and receive support from an upper portion of the rear of the frame at a point in proximity to and forward of the handle;

said shield also having a mounting aperture positioned directly below said notch and spaced above a lower margin of said shield and being sized to fit over and receive support from a threaded end of an elongated rear blade tensioning support held within a lower corner of the frame;

said shield extending vertically along the upright central portion thereof
against a rear upright portion of the frame which extends between
said notch and said mounting aperture;

said shield being held in operative position with respect to the frame only by
the resilient fit of said notch around the frame and a threaded nut
engaged over the rear blade tensioning member against a portion of
said shield surrounding said mounting aperture;

said shield having sufficient resiliency for a portion thereof to be protectively
deflected around a corresponding portion of the hand upon impact
against an object during use of the hacksaw.